WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An isolated RIP-Thr^{514} polypeptide, comprising at least 10 consecutive amino acid residues of the amino acid sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO:2, which consecutive amino acid residues comprise the amino acid residue 514 (Thr) of SEQ ID NO:2.

2. An isolated polypeptide according to claim 1, wherein said polypeptide has an activity selected from at least one of: a kinase or kinase inhibitory activity or a RIP-binding or binding inhibitory activity.

3. An isolated or recombinant RIP-ACA$^{1540\text{-}1542}$ nucleic acid comprising at least 24 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence set forth as SEQ ID NO:1, which consecutive polynucleotides comprise the polynucleotides 1540-1542 (ACA) of SEQ ID NO:1.

4. A recombinant nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide according to claim 1.

5. A cell comprising a nucleic acid according to claim 4.

6. A method of making an isolated RIP polypeptide, said method comprising steps: introducing a nucleic acid according to claim 4 into a host cell or cellular extract, incubating said host cell or extract under conditions whereby said nucleic acid is expressed as a transcript and said transcript is expressed as a translation product comprising said polypeptide, and isolating said translation product.

7. A method of screening for an agent which modulates the interaction of a RIP polypeptide to a binding target, said method comprising the steps of:

incubating a mixture comprising:

an isolated polypeptide according to claim 1,

a binding target of said polypeptide, and

a candidate agent;

under conditions whereby, but for the presence of said agent, said polypeptide

specifically binds said binding target at a reference affinity;

detecting the binding affinity of said polypeptide to said binding target to determine an agent-biased affinity, wherein a difference between the agent-biased affinity and the reference affinity indicates that said agent modulates the binding of said polypeptide to said binding target.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein said binding target is a natural intracellular substrate and said reference and agent-biased binding affinity is detected as phosphorylation of said substrate.

9. A method according to claim 7, wherein said binding target comprises a Tumor necrosis factor receptor Associated Factor -2 (TRAF2) or a Tumor necrosis factor Receptor-1 Associated Death Domain protein (TRADD).